Urban Wildlife

How to Live Happily Ever After



Huntsville Animal Services
Humane Education Department
www.huntsvilleanimals.com



Urban Wildlife

- > Definition
- Wild Life Requirements
- Indigenous Animals
- > Habitat Modifications
- Disillusionment of Trapping
- > Orphans







Definition





"Any wild animal that lives in an urban environment or in an urban/rural interface."



Make a House a Home...

Wildlife has many of the same requirements, especially when looking for permanent residence:

- Food Source
- Water Source
- Shelter
- Living Space

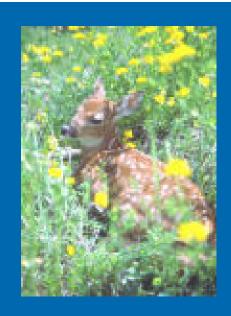
Indigenous Wildlife

- > Deer
- Opossums
- > Raccoons
- > Squirrels
- Coyotes
- > Foxes
- > Rabbits
- > Bats

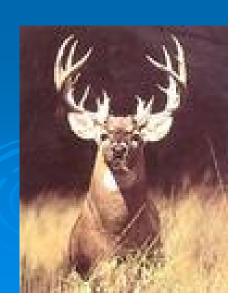
- > Birds
- > Skunks
- > Snakes
- Beavers
- Ground Hogs
- > Rodents
 - House Mice
 - Voles
 - Rats



Deer



- Usual complaint is that they eat the garden plants.
- Best way to keep them away is an outside dog.
- Selective planting will also discourage them.

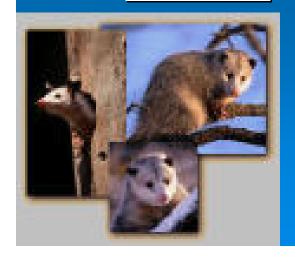




Opossums



- > Ominvores
- > Pose no direct threat to people or pets.
- Exceptionally non-aggressive and nondestructive. If you have damage to your house or property, another animal is doing it.
- > DO NOT CARRY OR TRANSMIT RABIES!









Raccoons



- > Omnivores
- Primary complaint is that they like to eat our garbage & make a mess pilfering our trash cans
- Humans are their primary enemy
- Typically non-aggressive (except during mating season & defending their young)
- Curious creatures by nature







Squirrels



- > Non-aggressive
- > Herbivores
- Nuisance in bird feeders









Coyotes



- > 80% of their diet consists of rodents very beneficial for population control
- Omnivores will also eat fruits, berries, and carrion: Also Opportunistic feeders – keep cats and small dogs indoors at night
- > Humans are their #1 enemy
- Primarily nocturnal, occasionally out in daytime







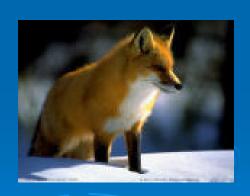
Fox

- Omnivores primary diet consists of rodents. They will eat cats if hungry enough & the opportunity arises.
- > Human presence will scare them away
- Usually nocturnal, but may be seen sunning themselves.











Rabbits





- > Herbivores
- Not very destructive
- People like having them around because "they're cute"







Bats

- Abnormally & inappropriately feared
- Enormously beneficial insectivores!
- If roosting in your attic, you must be careful that they don't have young before you exclude them.
- Patience is the key with bat removal. Most wildlife removal companies do not use humane methods when working with bats.





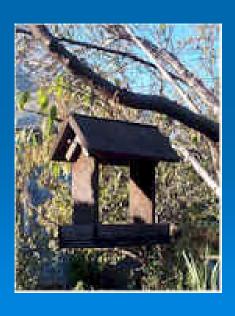




Birds



- People don't usually complain about birds
- Often, they are encouraged to come for our personal viewing pleasure









Skunks

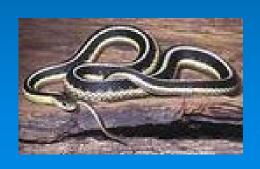


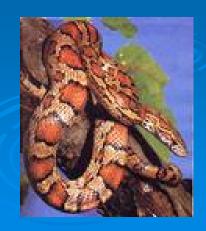
- > Slow, curious members of the weasel family
- Omnivores 70% of their diet consists of insects considered harmful to humans, including the black widow spider (so they're not all bad!)
- Generally nocturnal, coming out at sunset
- Get along marvelously with house cats
- Seldom spray without warning or cause; Usually they need to feel threatened to spray. Their spray is very accurate up to 15'.
- They will come into the house through pet doors to eat with the cat or to find a quiet closet to sleep in.



Snakes

- Very beneficial to rodent control
- Most are not harmful
- As much a part of our environment as the rest of the wild life
- Many people are repulsed and frightened by them



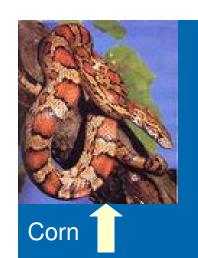


Snakes

Average 6:1 snake encounters will be with non-venomous species.

- > Non-venomous
 - Worm Snake
 - Black Racer
 - Black or Gray Rat
 - Hognose
 - Black or Eastern King
 - Milk
 - Ribbon
 - Garter

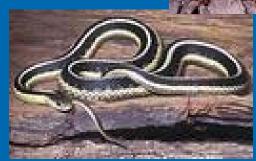
- > Venomous
 - Copperhead
 - Cottonmouth (Water Moccasin)
 - Timber Rattler
 - Carolina or Dusky Pigmy Rattler



Non-Venomous

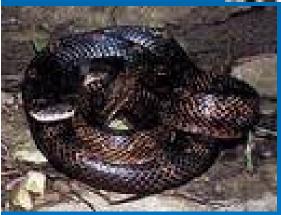


Ringneck



Ribbon

Garter



Worm

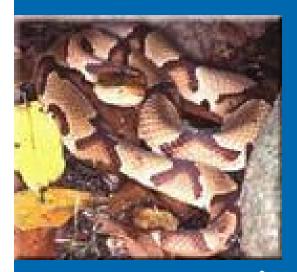




Milk



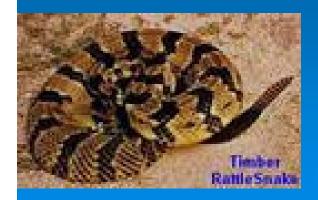




Copperheads:

•Found in/around wooded areas

•shy



Venomous

Cottonmouths:

- •AKA Watermoccasins
- •Found in/around water
- Very aggressive



Rattlers:

- •Found in/around covered & wooded areas
- Less common than other two types





Beavers



- Largest Rodents
- > Herbivores
- Can be advantageous to environment:
 - Improve water quantity & quality
 - Stop soil erosion
 - Stimulate tree growth
 - Prevent forest fires by creating "fire lines" with larger bodies of water
- Wrap Trees!





Groundhogs

- > Also known as a "Woodchuck"
- Harmless to people
- > Herbivores
- Most common complaint is that they get into gardens
- > They HATE used kitty litter! It's a good deterrent.









Miscellaneous Rodents

- > House mice, voles (aka: field mouse), rats, etc...
- > Common in our agricultural environment
- Can cause damage to houses, walls, electrical components, etc.
- > Their presence often brings in the carnivores: snakes, fox, coyotes, etc.
- Best hope is to keep them outside!





Habitat Modification

- Best way to get rid of ALL of the animals listed
 - Noise
 - Play a radio outside of their nest continually
 - Windchimes
 - Play recordings of animal distress calls
 - Play recordings of predator calls

Smell

- Ammonia soaked rags
- Used cat litter
- Human Hair or old dirty (smelly) clothing
- Mothballs or Mothflakes
- Bone tar oil
- "predator" urine
- Capzacin Peppers

Habitat Modification

- > Exclusion
 - Fences
 - Netting
 - Electric fencing
- Remove Food Source
- One-way doors to their nests (be sure NOT to do this when babies are present!)
- Lock pet doors at night (skunks & raccoons will come in & make themselves at home!)
- Eliminate outside water sources

- Visual Repellants
 - Mirrors
 - Pie Tins
 - Flags
 - Kites
 - Strips of foil
 - Plastic Raptors
 - Lights
 - Flood
 - Strobe
 - Christmas
 - Revolving

Common Repellant Recipe

- One Chopped Yellow Onion
- One Chopped Jalapeno Pepper
- One Tablespoon of Cayenne Pepper
- > Boil for 20 minutes in 2 quarts of water.
- > Cool & strain
- > Spray where you don't want animals

Trapping



- ➤ Not a good alternative Why?
 - Relocated Animals usually don't make it
 - Area where they are moved to usually is ecologically full and cannot support more animals
 - 50% of relocated raccoons die within 3 months of release!
 - Other animals will fill the void of the removed animal
 - Larger litter production
 - Allow "outsiders" to move in

Orphans

- Are they really?
- Bird Nestlings (naked or beginning feathers): If possible, place back into nest; construct makeshift nest & place as close as possible to original nest location. Watch for parental return.
- Bird Fledglings: They are learning to fly. Leave them alone, bring cats & dogs in for the bird's protection
- Rabbits: 4", full fur, open eyes they're on their own! No fur & not in nest return them to the nest & mark with crossed sticks lying on top. Watch for parental return
- Squirrels: small & closed eyes? Place in box at base of tree & leave. Watch for parental return
- > Fawns: Leave them alone, mother deer will return.
- Opossums: 7", fully furred they are on their own! Less than 7", contact rehabilitator. Still in pouch? Do not remove, contact rehabilitator!

Orphans



- If the parents do not return, retrieve the baby into a warm, safe, dry, protected area.
- Contact a licensed, professional rehabilitator
- > North Alabama Wildlife Rehabilitators
 - 256-883-0667
- > All Bat Inquiries
 - 256-534-7809

Sources & Resources

- > www.projectwildlife.org
- > www.urbanforestrysouth.org
- > <u>www.fund.org</u>
- www.urbanwildliferescue.org
- > www.opossum.org
- www.vcn.bc.ca/spes/urbanwildlife
- www.knology.net/~korell/nasnakes.htm
- > www.batcon.org

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